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Department of State

15572
INCOMING
TELEGRAM

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ACTION EAP-00

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AND OCEANIAN AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT, AT 1500 HOURS
LOCAL TIME ON JUNE 6. AT THAT TIME, WE INFORMED
ZHANG OF OUR RECOMMENDATION TO WASHINGTON THAT
THE PRESIDENT'S OFFER OF HUMANITARIAN AID BE
HANDLED THROUGH RED CROSS CHANNELS. HE HAD NO
RESPONSE. LILLEY

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0211

CONFIDENTIAL BEIJING 15572

E.O. 12356; N/A
TAGS: PREL, PHUM, CH
SUBJECT: HUMANITARIAN AND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE FOR
-- CHINA

REF: STATE 177848

1. CONFIDENTIAL-ENTIRE TEXT.

2. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES
DO NOT NORMALLY ACCEPT HUMANITARIAN DISASTER
ASSISTANCE FROM FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS AND
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS UNLESS CHINA HAS
FIRST ISSUED A FORMAL NOTICE THAT SUCH AID
IS NECESSARY AND WELCOME. IN THE CASE OF FOREIGN
ASSISTANCE FOR VICTIMS OF RECENT MILITARY VIOLENCE,
SUCH A NOTIFICATION IS NOT LIKELY TO BE ISSUED,
AND GIVEN CURRENT POLITICAL TENSIONS, UNILATERAL
OFFERS OF AID COULD WELL BE PERCEIVED (AND
DEBUNKED) AS INTERFERENCE IN CHINA'S INTERNAL
ON THIS ISSUE HAVE NO DOUBT BEEN FURTHER INFLAMED
BY THE PRESIDENT'S STRONG CONDEMNATION OF THE
VIOLENCE.
AFFAIRS.

3. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, EMBASSY BELIEVES
THAT ANY ATTEMPT TO WORK DIRECTLY THROUGH THE
CHINESE RED CROSS (ICRC) IN BEIJING IS UNLIKELY
TO SUCCEED, AND MIGHT PROVOKE A STRONGLY
NEGATIVE RESPONSE FROM THE GOVERNMENT. A
MORE INDIRECT APPROACH, HOWEVER, OUTSIDE OF
NORMAL BILATERAL POLITICAL CHANNELS, MIGHT
DEFUSE PRC DEFENSIVENESS TO SOME EXTENT AND
CREATE CONDITIONS THAT WOULD MAKE IT POSSIBLE
FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO PERMIT PRC TO ACCEPT
THE PRESIDENT'S OFFER.

4. THEREFORE, WE RECOMMEND THAT THE DEPARTMENT
EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF CHANNELING OUR OFFER
OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE THROUGH THE INTERN-
ATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS (ICRC)
HEADQUARTERS. BY WORKING THROUGH THE ICRC-CRC
CONNECTION OUTSIDE OF GOVERNMENTAL CHANNELS,
WE MAY BE ABLE TO ALLEVIATE CHINESE POLITICAL
SENSITIVITIES WHILE UTILIZING ICRC EXPERTISE
TO FACILITATE THE TRANSFER OF AID RESOURCES
TO CHINA. AT THE SAME TIME, WORKING INDIRECTLY
THROUGH THE ICRC WOULD NOT IN ANY WAY DILUTE
THE PUBLIC IMPACT OF THE PRESIDENT'S
HUMANITARIAN GESTURE, SINCE WE HAVE ALREADY
PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED OUR INTENTION TO HELP THE
VICTIMS OF MILITARY VIOLENCE.

5. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS CALLED ON ZHANG YIJUN,
DIRECTOR, MFA DEPARTMENT OF NORTH AMERICA

United States Department of State
Office of FOI, Privacy, & Classification Review
Review Authority: MILLER, ROBERT
Date: 01/16/96
Case ID: 9206307

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